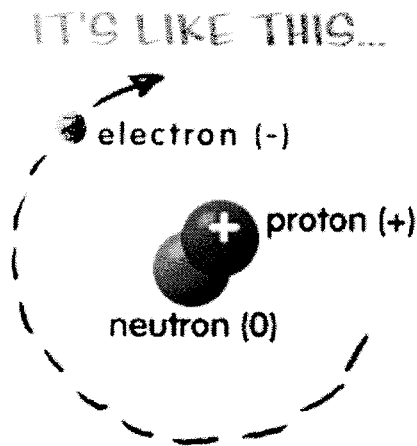


Atoms

Matter is everything around you. Matter is anything that has a mass. Matter is anything made of **atoms** and **molecules**. **Atoms** are the basis of chemistry. They are the basis for everything in the Universe. You should start by remembering that matter is composed of **atoms**. **Atoms** are the basic building blocks of everything.



Atoms are made of even smaller pieces, like quarks, but even though those super tiny **atomic** particles exist, there are three basic parts of an **atom**. The parts are the electrons, protons, and neutrons.

There are three pieces to an **atom**. There are electrons, protons, and neutrons. That's all you have to remember. Three things! As you know, there are over 100 **elements** in the periodic table. The thing that makes each of those **elements**

different is the number of electrons, protons, and neutrons. The protons and neutrons are always in the center of the **atom**. Scientists call the center of the **atom** the nucleus. The electrons are always found whizzing around the center in areas called orbitals.

You can also see that each piece has either a "+", "-", or a "0." That symbol refers to the charge of the particle. The electron always has a "-" or negative charge. The proton always has a "+" or positive charge. If the charge of an entire atom is "0", that means there are equal numbers of positive and negative pieces, equal numbers of electrons and protons. The third particle is the neutron. It has a neutral charge (a charge of zero).

